

# Lesson Three: History (Source Analysis)

## Lesson plan

### Learning objectives

By the end of the lesson students will:

- Know there are different types of sources available to interpret historical events.
- Understand that different types of sources have different strengths and weaknesses.
- Be able to weigh up the strengths and weaknesses of sources and decide how reliable a source is.

### Overview

The class will analyse the sources from Lesson One to assess their reliability.

### Equipment needed

You will need:

- PowerPoint downloadable from [www.cnduk.org/information/item/2008](http://www.cnduk.org/information/item/2008)
- Six or more sources from Lesson One. Suggested sources:
  - American and Japanese propaganda posters
  - Two or more of Truman's diary entries
  - Photos of Nagasaki before and after the bombings
  - Newspaper headlines
  - One or more of the 'Reactions to the bombings' quotes
  - Survivor artwork, or Trinity extract, or Barefoot Gen extract
- Source evaluation sheets (p 86)

### Starter (10-15 minutes)

- Go through the PowerPoint that introduces students to facts about sources and (if applicable) reminds them about the first lesson. If the class hasn't done Lesson One, summarise the bombings for them using the PowerPoint from that lesson.
- Clarify key terms to do with source analysis (source, provenance, primary/secondary, reliability, etc).

### Source analysis (30 minutes)

- Split the class into six or more groups (depending on how many sources you use).
- Each group is handed a source and some information about its provenance.
- They will also have a sheet of questions to help them evaluate the source.
- Each student will be responsible for leading the discussion for one question, write down the key points in the relevant box, and then pass the sheet to the next student.
- The students will then decide in their groups how reliable their source is, based on what they've written/discussed.
- Using the PowerPoint to show their source to the whole class, each group reports back, explaining how reliable they feel the source is for learning about the bombings.
- Stick all the sources to the whiteboard/wall. Each student is given a sticky dot and asked to place it on the source they think is the most reliable (you can instigate a rule of not placing it on your 'own' source if you feel your class needs this!).

### Plenary (10-15 minutes)

- Discuss: Which source was voted the most reliable? Why? What would make it even more reliable?

**Homework:** Find – and evaluate – real witness testimonies online.

### Differentiation

- **Higher ability extension activity 2:** Get students to read two or more opposing arguments by historians on Truman's decision, and to discuss and then write down which they find most persuasive. The following historiographical sources are freely-accessible: a blog post by Gar Alperovitz ([www.garalperovitz.com/2005/08/hiroshima-after-sixty-years-the-debate-continues](http://www.garalperovitz.com/2005/08/hiroshima-after-sixty-years-the-debate-continues)); the vivid exchange between Robert Marshall, Sheila Kerr and others (<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=5dRRBV5ZC3wC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>, pp.180-192); Derek Ide's detailed survey ([www.hamptoninstitution.org/hiroshima-historiography.html#\\_edn1](http://www.hamptoninstitution.org/hiroshima-historiography.html#_edn1)); and J. Samuel Walker's concise book 'Prompt And Utter Destruction' (<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=EJb-CwAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>). The 1995 ABC documentary 'Hiroshima: Why The Bomb Was Dropped' ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=FIH5z3kCIKo&t=2014s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FIH5z3kCIKo&t=2014s)) is also insightful.

### Enrichment

- Visit a museum (see Lesson Two Enrichment)

## Source evaluation

What sort of source is this? Circle: *Photo/Poster/Graphic novel/Poem or Song/Drawing/Newspaper headline/Diary or Memoirs entry/Letter*

When was this source created?

Who created it?

Is it primary or secondary?

Why do you think this source was made?

Who do you think the source was made for? (ie Who is the intended audience?)

What can we learn from the source? What does it tell us about the bombings and how they were viewed?

Is the source biased? If so, how?

How reliable does your group think the source is? Why? (Consider the information you've written above, when making your decision).